DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 481 007 FL 027 847

AUTHOR	Robin, Richard
TITLE	Working with Lecturers and Part-Time Faculty: A Case Study of Russian in the National Capital Area.
PUB DATE	2000-00-00
NOTE	10p.; In: Mentoring Foreign Language Teaching Assistants, Lecturers, and Adjunct Faculty. Issues in Language Program Direction: A Series in Annual Volumes; see FL 027 839.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative (142)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Case Studies; *College Faculty; Departments; Higher Education; *Part Time Faculty; *Russian; Second Language Instruction; Second Language Learning
IDENTIFIERS	*District of Columbia

ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the specific issues and problems of hiring part-time instructors for foreign language courses. Specifically, it discusses the part-time situation for teaching Russian in the Washington, DC area. It looks first at the major factors involved in hiring part-timers, particularly compared to graduate teaching assistants, commonly considered an ideal source of affordable language instructors. Next, the results of an informal anonymous survey of schools offering Russian in the area are presented. Discussion of the survey results is supplemented with input from individual interviews with both part-timers and their employers. The chapter concludes with suggestions for addressing the most troubling problems of part-time employment in Russian departments. (Contains 18 references, 4 endnotes, and 3 tables.) (Author/VWL)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 481 007

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sean Ketchem

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FL 027 847

Working with Lecturers and Part-Time Faculty: A Case Study of Russian in the National Capital Area

Richard Robin
George Washington University

Introduction

Many in our profession have examined the growing use of part-time faculty to teach undergraduate foreign language courses. Huber (1995, 1993) and Benjamin (1998) document the explosion in the use of part-time faculty in foreign language instruction since the 1980s.[1] Yet reliance on part-time instructors poses problems both for the institutions hiring them and for the part-time teachers themselves. Egged on by contributors to *ADFL Bulletin* and the authors of countless position papers on the issue of part-time faculty,[2] we full-time faculty descend on deans and provosts with all the arguments we can bring to bear. For institutions the growing dependence on part-timers invites ethical questions. Some point out that part-timers do what all too many view as "grunt" work at low pay with no benefits in a gender ratio that more than casually suggests discrimination (Sullivan 1993; Warhol 1997; ADE 1998). Others among us question the ethics of using part-timers to free senior faculty members from teaching assignments, especially undergraduate introductory classes, or in our case, language classes. From the part-time instructors' point of view, job stability, salary, and time commitment are crucial issues. No matter what the perspective, the issue of part-time instructors has become central in foreign language programs—one that we must address realistically.

This chapter examines the specific issues and problems in hiring part-time instructors for foreign language courses. Specifically, I will discuss the part-time situation for teaching Russian in the Washington National Capital Area. I will look first at the major factors in hiring part-timers, particularly compared to graduate teaching assistants,

commonly considered an ideal source of affordable language instructors. I will then discuss the results of an informal anonymous survey of schools offering Russian in the National Capital Area.[3] The discussion of survey results is supplemented with input from individual interviews with both part-timers and their employers in this area. Although this survey represents a microcosm of the Russian teaching situation, it is hoped that the experience of this region and its institutions can be instructive for other institutions in similar circumstances. The chapter concludes with suggestions for addressing the most troubling problems of part-time employment in Russian departments.

Russian Language Teaching in the National Capital Area: An Overview

Few institutions suffer more from reliance on part-timers to teach language, Russian and other less commonly taught languages in particular, than medium-size urban campuses with no graduate programs. The size guarantees just enough Russian/Slavic language courses to outpace the number of available permanent instructors. Would-be teachers, many willing to work at "Russian" wages, abound. Truly gifted teachers, however, do not. With almost no graduate students to rely on, schools race to find whatever cheap talent they can.

The Washington, D.C. National Capital Area, with nine colleges and universities that teach or have recently taught Russian, is representative of what could be either heaven or hell for part-time instructors and those who employ them. Nine colleges in the area have offered Russian over the last ten years. Four of these institutions have undergraduate Russian majors. One other has a four-level program with no major. Three offer Russian instruction dependent on student demand. Regardless of their program offerings, all use part-time faculty. Only one uses graduate teaching assistants as well. Part-timers in the National Capital Area find teaching jobs not only in colleges, but also in a half dozen or so international, federal, and private consulting agencies that make up the language learning landscape of this city.

Part-Timers or Graduate Teaching Assistants?

The National Capital Area has only one Russian/Slavic graduate program (a masters'), and graduate teaching assistants account for only two Russian teachers with one section each, compared to 51 sections staffed by other part-time faculty. The lack of graduate students as a cheap and more ethically defensible source of apprentice labor lends a certain cast to the area's part-time profile.

However, not all view graduate teaching assistants as a reasonable alternative to part-time faculty members. Many view both graduate teaching assistants and part-timers with the same jaundiced eye. For that matter, Langenberg (1988) refers to *all* non-tenure-track faculty members as the "subfaculty." However, the differences between part-timers and graduate teaching assistants are in fact significant.

1. Professional profile and motivation. Those who seek part-time employment teaching foreign language are typically not pursuing careers in education or academia, or they may be at the end of a career in teaching. Even for those part-timers with a life-long professional interest, career rewards for good work are minimal. Graduate teaching assistants, on the other hand, are assumed to have made a career decision about the field. Most of those in Ph.D. programs will be seeking tenure-track jobs. Here, the rewards for successful teaching extend well beyond one's graduate career. While many decry the reliance on graduate assistants as a money-driven diminution of the undergraduate experience, administrators can argue that giving graduate students paid apprenticeships is a necessary part of replenishing the field. No such argument can be made to defend part-time employment. Still, administrators often claim that part-timers are, in fact, highly prized professionals who have deigned to share their intellectual resources with a university community. In the National Capital Area that idealization applies to a small number of experts, often retired from service in the government or the private sector, who indeed find fulfillment in sharing their expertise with new generations of students and for whom the pay is strictly symbolic. (For Langenberg 1998, such teachers are true *adjuncts*—non-academic professionals who devote a fraction of their time to imparting knowledge about their work; they are not academic part-timers in the traditional sense.) Thus the profile of a Mary Jones from the U.S. Department of State or a John Smith from the Rand Corporation is hardly typical of an Anna Ivanova who juggles her schedule to teach three lower-division Russian courses, all on different campuses.

2. Compensation. Part-timers are typically paid a few thousand dollars per course with no benefits, except perhaps a parking space. Some schools allow part-time instructors limited tuition waivers. Graduate teaching assistants receive comparable cash stipends plus tuition waivers and student benefits (such as special health care plans available to students on many campuses). In many cases, the graduate assistant comes away with a considerably better package than the part-timer.

3. Training. Smaller, purely undergraduate departments have little reason to invest in teacher training for their part-timers. Part-timers, in turn, have little incentive to invest their own time or money into outside workshops, as they learn very quickly that such efforts go unrewarded. Compare this to the lavish treatment accorded graduate assistants in the form of extensive in-service training and support for attendance at teaching and curriculum workshops by departments with an eye on job placement for their students.

4. Competence (teaching ability and target language proficiency). Generalizations here are always dangerous, but a few points are worth mentioning. Part-timers are mostly native speakers (and mostly women). Many come to their part-time positions with little or no experience of teaching Russian in a North American milieu, although many have taught English to Russians. While they may have some methodological theory behind them, part-timers must learn what they can expect of American students in a typical four hours a week. They must also discover what Americans bring with them to the foreign language classroom, which for many Russian émigrés is shockingly little. Graduate teaching assistants, on the other hand, are likely to be products of the North American educational system who took the typical route to their Russian: college (perhaps preceded by high school), followed by study and/or work in country (i.e., abroad). At the very least, such teachers remember their own Russian-learning experiences. In those cases where graduate students have had the benefit of competent instruction, they have pedagogical models to follow. Of course, on the downside, non-Russian graduate assistants come to the classroom with deficiencies in the target language, some of which may be significant, especially in a classroom where the teacher is expected to engage in extensive role-plays as the "native Russian." Role-play, a classroom rarity twenty or thirty years ago, requires the kind of near-nativelike behavior that is beyond the proficiency level of many graduate assistants.

5. Technology readiness. Technology is time-intensive. Learning how to use it and planning its integration into the curriculum demands a commitment that is likely to go well beyond what can be reasonably expected from a part-time employee. Mastering the details of the latest software on campus may be too much to ask of a teacher who shows up to teach only three hours a week. Graduate teaching assistants, with a career ahead of them to map out, are more likely than part-timers to be receptive to and even innovative in the use of instructional technology. With more on-campus time to devote to the technologies specific to the institution in question, teaching assistants are able to get a handle on what existing media fit into what course; many create their own course-specific materials.

6. Institutional loyalty and time on the job. The freelancing nature of part-time work lessens the dependence on and loyalty to a single employer. Serving many masters creates time problems: many part-timers run from campus to campus, leaving little time for extra office hours, meetings, or training sessions. More ominous are the consequences of a spat between a part-timer and an employer. With contacts throughout the tight-knit Russian-language teaching community of a city, a dissatisfied part-timer is in a position to spread a great deal of local ill will. Graduate students are most likely bound to one department. As teachers they are usually guided by their own professors, creating a mentoring relationship and further incentives to do well.

Given the unavailability of graduate teaching assistants for all but two sections in one of the schools in the National Capital Area, program directors are confronted with factors that are likely to be magnified representations of other localities.

Survey of the National Capital Area

The survey supplies an overview of the situation with part-time instruction of Russian language courses at nine institutions in the National Capital Area. The discussion of the survey results is based on these categories: people and pay scale, teaching load, training and experience, and student perceptions/language proficiency outcomes.

The Local Market: People and Pay Scale

On the face of it, part-timers wishing to sell their services to our schools should be facing a buyer's market with far more job-seekers than positions available. (Contrast this to the situation in a language like German, where recent local experience shows that even untrained teachers are hard to come by at the current low pay scale.) But qualified Russian teachers represent a tiny fraction of the candidates. Many job seekers—and some administrators—are surprised to learn that departments seek more in the way of qualifications than the status of an educated native speaker. Local colleges compete for talent not only with each other, but also with those offering contract positions in the public and private sectors. Respondents from three schools said that they hire only those with solid methodological training. Many part-timers find their way into

academic teaching during or after a part-time job at the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, or private language agencies such as Diplomatic Language Services, Inlingua, or Berlitz. Many others have left stable careers as language program directors in the Russian educational system. For that reason identifying and hiring good people is often a matter of enticing them away from more lucrative, prestigious, or convenient positions elsewhere.

Creating such enticements is difficult because institutions find it hard to be flexible about pay. Part-time budgets for new hires are usually fixed by the dean, based on years of service at a given institution (and only sometimes on experience elsewhere). As Table 1 shows, new hirees can count on pay ranging from $567 per credit hour taught ($1700 per semester-length 5-credit course) to $1000 per credit hour ($3000 for three hours a week). The high end in the area, for those with the most experience in terms of extensive academic backgrounds at other schools, is $1333 per credit hour or $4000 for three credit hours. Both the median and the mode is $750 per credit hour where most schools offer basic language at four credits per course.

Table 1.
Pay

Institution (anonymous)	low end		high end	
	pay/ course	pay/ cr-hr	pay/ course	pay/ cr-hr
1	2835	566.6	2835	567
2	3000	1000	4000	1333
3	2700	900	4000	1333
4	2200	550	3000	750
5	1500	750	3000	750
6	3000	750	3000	750
7	3000	750	3000	750
8	2800	700	2800	700
9	1800	600	1800	600
Average Nat'l Capital Area	2537	729	3048	837
Median Nat'l Capital Area	2800	750	3000	750
Mode Nat'l Capital Area	3000	750	3000	750

Note: Interviewees reported per-course pay and number of credit hours taught, from which pay per credit hour was calculated.

Interviews revealed that compensation is not the only factor that prospective part-time teachers consider. Because they often have other obligations, part-timers seek out jobs with convenient scheduling, such as contiguously scheduled classes or positions that offer two sections of the same course (one preparation). Finally, the quality of the student body can be a deciding factor.

Despite a friendly competition for the limited resources in the area, local institutions often assist each other in finding part-time instructors. It is not unusual for language program directors and department chairs to consult with each other and share the available talent.

Teaching Load

Most universities follow AAUP guidelines for part-time faculty, allowing a maximum of two courses per semester. Of course, given that language courses in the National Capital Area can run four or five hours weekly, the actual number of classroom hours for two courses can equal that of a load of three courses per semester. Furthermore, departments usually have little trouble convincing the office of human resources to approve an occasional third course for a part-time instructor. Three schools have recently had part-timers take on a third full course, despite the discomfort of the administration.

How much Russian language instruction is in the hands of part-timers? (See Table 2.) Of the nine respondent schools, three have no regular program in Russian, and part-timers are thus used for all instruction. In the remaining six schools, part-timers teach from 33.3% to 62.5% of all language sections for an average of 51.1%. (According to Benjamin [1998], the national average for foreign language courses taught by part-timers in four-year colleges is 37.1%.)

Because the pay is low and part-timers are hired exclusively to cover teaching responsibilities, the departments surveyed are loath to add to part-timers' responsibilities when full-timers are available (Russian Club, extra meetings, and so on). That is not surprising, given the pittance that most part-timers receive. On the other hand, such limitations deprive the department of using a large number of their faculty members for various forms of outreach.

The use of part-timers is often viewed as academia's way of coping with rising enrollments and oversubscribed classes (Welles 1998a, 1998b). That applies to many freshman English classes, and in foreign languages, to Spanish classes. But Russian is not Spanish, and departments that teach Russian find that the opposite is true: low enrollments in Russian are a constant threat to multiple sections, or to entire programs themselves. In such an environment, administrators

Table 2.
Full-Timer (FT) / Part-Timer (PT) Ratio

Institution (anonymous)	1st year		2nd year		3rd year		4th year		Other		Totals		Of	Total %	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	Total	FT	PT
1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4	50.0	50.0
2	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	4	2	6	66.7	33.3
3	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	2	2	3	5	8	37.5	62.5
4	3	3	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	7	7	14	50.0	50.0
5	1	1	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	3	4	7	42.9	57.1
6	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	4	4	8	50.0	50.0
7	0	1									0	1	1	0.0	100.0
8	0	1	0	1	0	1					0	3	3	0.0	100.0
9	0	1	0	1							0	2	2	0.0	100.0
Nat'l Cap PTs/FTs*	8	8	4	7	6	3	5	2	4	4	23	24	47	48.9	51.1
Nat'l Cap Overall*	8	11	4	9	6	4	5	2	4	4	23	30	53	43.4	56.6
U.S. 4 yr. coll. FLs														62.9	37.1
U.S. 4 yr. coll. Overall														61.9	38.1

Note: Data does not include graduate teaching assistants. One of the National Capital Area institutions uses two graduate teaching assistants.

and undersubscribed departments have arrived at a tacit agreement: part-time instructors serve as a hedge against permanent closings. Take the case of one local institution where enrollment in the only section of first-year Russian dropped below critical mass (in this case eight registrations). The part-timer was let go until better days, and the Russian course remained in the catalogue.

Training and Experience

While no respondent reported formal in-house training, several methods of quality control were described, including class observation and student evaluation. Six of the nine schools reported class peer visits as a method of quality control. Two schools reported that they send new teachers to visit the classes of exemplary teachers. Program directors from four schools (all of which have part-timers teaching alongside full-timers) emphasized limiting their hiring pool to people with previous pedagogical training and experience. By pedagogical training they mean training that native speakers of Russian had received in language programs at various institutes or university departments (Pushkin Institute, Moscow State University, Herzen Pedagogical University, Nizhnii Novgorod Pedagogical University, and so forth).[4] Despite the native speakers' qualifications and experience, three schools reported a preference to place native-speaker part-timers in tandem with full-time teachers in lower division courses where possible. *In tandem* refers to strictly team-taught courses (mostly introductory intensive courses at six to eight hours a week) as well as to tightly coordinated sections, in which those teaching in tandem are required to adhere closely to a day-by-day syllabus. Only in upper-division courses, where, arguably, a teacher serves primarily as a native informant, do departments feel that they can give part-timers more autonomy. The resulting picture is one in which part-time teachers have little in the way of programmatic responsibilities. However, as one respondent noted, not all senior instructors are willing to observe the unspoken rule that tandem teachers not be saddled with heavier curricular responsibilities.

Student Perceptions and Performance Outcomes

Do students see a difference between the instruction they get from part-timers versus what they get from full-time faculty? (See Table 3.) Previous studies suggest that part-timers' success or lack thereof is based on too many individual factors to be readily codified (Benjamin 1998; Hoffman 1980). Lombardi (1992, p. 59) goes so far as to suggest that part-timers are in a position to come out ahead: with no tenure protection, they might put forth more effort in preparation and

Table 3.
Comparisons and Comments

Institution, Comparison		Comments
1	~same	None
2	~same	PTs teach lower division courses in tandem with FTs.
3	~same	PTs with previous pedagogical training. 2 Non-NSs.
4	FT slightly better	PTs with previous pedagogical training. Intensive courses taught in tandem. Nearly all NSs. Some PT spots consolidated into FT and regular PT.
5	Comparison impossible	PTs observe FT class. PTs teach different populations than FTs. Professional pedagogues only.
6	~same	PTs in tandem for intro courses; some PT spots done by GTA. PTs (not TAs) must be trained pedagogues and NSs. Emphasis on putting NS PTs in 3rd, 4th year.
7	PTs only	Suspended program
8	PTs only	FT became PT because of low enrollments.
9	PTs only	New program

FT - full-time. PT - part-time. NS - native speaker. GTA - graduate teaching assistant.

teaching than full-time instructors because they must satisfy the needs of their students or lose their jobs.

For all but one of the schools surveyed, the answers are based on respondents' impressions, either from student polling or proficiency testing, rather than hard data. Overall, part-timers' classroom delivery of Russian-language instruction does not vary tremendously in quality from that of full-timers. However, "classroom delivery of instruction" does not account for factors such as in-tandem teaching or strategies in assigning courses based on part-timers' perceived strengths and weaknesses (e.g., introductory versus advanced courses). In three schools, the issue is moot: all the Russian instructors are part-timers. In one of the schools, part-timers handle different courses with different populations (students with previous Russian instruction from elsewhere versus "home-grown" students, i.e., students whose previous instruction has been exclusively in that very same institution), making direct comparisons difficult. Faculty at the remaining four institutions answered that students perceived some difference but not much. Of course, such impressionistic responses could well reflect the efforts of the respondents to be fair to their part-time faculty, even at the expense of their own egos. After all, they were being asked to speculate

on how their students compared part-timers to themselves. Nevertheless, one of the institutions polled keeps statistical data on student preferences and speaking levels over the years. There the full-time Russian teachers win in popularity, but only by 0.3 on a scale of four points, a mere 8% difference.

Of course, popularity does not guarantee learning. But again, respondents were largely unwilling to claim that producing measurable results and being a full-time faculty member were clearly linked. One explanation, the use of native-speaker part-timers in positions that emphasize their strengths—upper-division courses and in tandem in beginning-language sequences—has already been discussed. The respondent from the school that divided classes on the basis of whether students came in with Russian from other institutions was unwilling to ascribe differences in performance to the instruction itself. The respondent felt that difference in previous preparation was enough to make direct comparisons difficult.

Summary and Suggestions

The most striking note to emerge from the survey is the perception of an almost non-existent gap in quality of instruction between full-timers and part-timers, despite the ethically questionable conditions under which part-timers work. The Soviet-era adage "They pretend to pay us, so we pretend to work" does not seem to apply here.

If the difference in student preference is small, and if the outcomes between classes taught by part-timers and classes taught by full-timers appear to be the same, why fret over who teaches Russian? Staffing, however, involves more than student evaluations. Language program directors must address a number of issues:

1. Risk. Each new hire entails a risk. Part-time hiring decisions often come at the last minute, with little opportunity for meaningful vetting. Choices are made on the basis of a CV, recommendations, and an interview. Classroom demonstrations at the end of the summer or during the winter break are usually out of the question. Yet seeing a teacher in action is key to making a successful hiring decision. Those who run programs threatened by low enrollments are understandably sensitive to the quality of instruction. Bad teachers drive students away, while good ones have the potential to retain or even attract students. As one of the interviewees said, "So far we've had lots of luck." Departments' attempts to minimize risk result in lost scheduling flexibility as part-timers are assigned to teach in tandem or advanced courses.

2. Faculty development. The volatility of the part-time pool hinders serious faculty development. Part-time faculty members are forced to be nomadic. For that reason, language program directors must think twice about sending part-timers to expensive proficiency or technology workshops, despite the fact that the part-timers are just as likely (even more likely) to participate enthusiastically and with tangible results.

3. Continuity. By and large, part-timers teaching Russian in the National Capital Area are successful in the classroom. Given long-term appointments, many would develop a student following—a must for any field with low enrollments that could threaten the elimination of jobs and/or entire programs. However, the nature of part-time employment makes such stability difficult.

The issues facing Russian departments in the National Capital Area are a subset of the national discussion of part-time instruction in higher education. Sweeping solutions are already on the table. Contributors to the *ADFL Bulletin* and the *ADFL Guidelines* themselves present the most quixotic of resolutions. Unless noted, all of the following are taken from the 1994 *ADFL Guidelines* (my emphasis below).

- As tenured faculty members retire, they should be replaced by tenure-track faculty members. Departments that routinely assign a large part of undergraduate instruction to ad junct faculty members should reconsider their staffin practices.
- Adjunct faculty members should be *hired*, reviewed, and given teaching assignments according to *processes comparable to those established for the tenured or tenure-track faculty members*.
- They should be paid *prorated salaries and receive basic benefits such as health insurance*.
- They should be eligible for incentives that foster professional development, including merit raises and *funds for research and travel*.
- Tenured and tenure-track professors must bear the weight of lower-division teaching (Lindenberger 1998; Ziolkowski 1998), even if they must be moved from teaching literature courses to teaching language (Berry 1996).
- Language departments should not have part-timers and other academic teaching staff with no academic standing (Bernhardt 1997).

In touting these proposals, we in the profession know full well that they are unrealistic. Departments that should "reconsider their staffing practices" usually do not have that kind of financial flexibility. To place part-time hiring practices on a par with those established for the tenured or tenure-track faculty members suggests funded national searches. The notion that senior faculty should retool for the first-year classroom implies that any inspired literature scholar can become an outstanding foreign language teacher. One of the reasons that part-time foreign language teachers are in their current predicament stems from the notion that anyone with an advanced degree and a background in the target language can do it.

The answers from the dean's office are blunt: part-timers are available at the pay scale offered. Abandoning part-time instruction would mean closing down courses with marginal enrollments. Part-timers keep tuition within some sort of limits while maintaining the required amount of physical plant and hardware expansion.

The need to reduce the risk of hiring part-timers and the need to bring a measure of stability to staffing prompts two feasible solutions. Both add to Langenberg's "subfaculty," discussed earlier. Both require compromise—on the part of the dean and the departments.

Solution #1: The "Mega-Teacher"

A mega-teacher's position, a full-time non-tenured position that is continuing (contingent on funding), combines the equivalent of four part-time slots (at $17,000 annually with no benefits) into one full-time "workhorse" slot: eight semester-long courses a year at $35,000 with benefits and other regular full-time privileges, such as travel money for conferences and voting representation at general faculty meetings. Such a job has no publishing expectations, and the teacher is responsible for some multi-section coordination (e.g., planning week-by-week learning objectives, arranging cross-section oral testing, scheduling peer tutoring, etc.) and extra-curricular activities (Russian Language Club, Russian Language Honor Society, and so forth).

What arguments can convince a dean to double the per-course cash salary and add benefits for what appears to be the same amount of teaching? What can allay the dean's fears about the creeping permanence of such a position?

To begin with, such a position provides the dean and the department a better grip on stable talent with undivided loyalties. Eight semester-long courses per year plus the extra duties suggested above is a bargain. Moreover (and perhaps more importantly these days), it gives the administration a place to spend the money fashionably: faculty development in using technology for teaching. Regular non-tenure

track faculty can be viewed as the best candidates for in-service development. Administrators justifiably feel that the cost of proficiency training and technology workshops is wasted on non-permanent part-timers. Even newly hired assistant professors have little incentive to do in-service training if it takes them away from the demands of publishable research; senior faculty, with established research agendas, are less likely to take advantage of additional training (technology, curriculum development, testing, etc.) to revamp instruction on a large scale. Additional service training for the "mega-teacher" thus becomes a matter of value-added pragmatism.

Deans often fear that regular full-time positions spanning six years or more can lead to an expectation of tenurability, even if the job description reads "non-tenure accruing." That may lead to contract stipulations that newly created regular full-time positions be limited to terms of six years. Even when the six-year tradition is set aside, the vagaries of Russian enrollments hang over "mega-teachers" as a threat to the continuation of such positions. Here language program directors must be willing to make concessions about the school's ability to terminate such a position.

At the same time, the additional skills that mega-teachers acquire through funded training raise their intrinsic teaching value and lessen the risk that their contracts will be summarily discontinued on the basis of enrollment alone. Potential alternative assignments include projects centering around technology in the foreign language classroom, the use of foreign languages across the curriculum, and even school-wide student advising. All of these time-intensive endeavors are suited to those faculty members whose main interests and talents remain closest to the classroom.

From the point of view of the department and the profession as a whole, does such a position not represent an ignominious retreat from academic professionalism in teaching foreign languages, confirming to the administration that we are essentially service departments? Clearly, this is a step back from the notion that every practicing language teacher be in a tenure-track position. However, we should not lose sight of the current situation: nationwide 37.1% of our foreign language courses in four-year colleges are staffed by part-timers (Benjamin 1998), and for Russian in the National Capital Area, that number tops 51% in colleges where part-timers and full-timers work side by side. With a nationwide rise in the number of part-time college teachers plus lowered enrollments in Slavics, changing part-timers into non-tenured full-timers is a major advance. Still, ethical questions remain: a non-tenure-track "contingency" full-timer receives only three-fourths of the cash salary of a beginning assistant professor.

However, this is surely an improvement over a stable of part-timers whose compensation is just a bit more than symbolic.

Staffing the position of "mega-teacher" is not without pitfalls. With the dearth of jobs in Slavics, a department can expect to see up to a hundred applications, most from ABDs or recent Ph.D.s hoping for a "real" job elsewhere—perhaps after completing a dissertation or producing a few publications. A more suitable candidate is likely to be one of the current part-timers who has managed to make a distinguished teaching career and deserves promotion.

Solution #2: Regular Part-Time Positions

Two respondents in the survey reported that regular part-time faculty typically teach at least two courses per year for at least $15,000 per year (typically $3750 per semester course) with benefits. Any additional courses are pro-rated. Expenditures on regular part-time faculty come to roughly double those required for per-course part-time instructors. The advantage to both the departments and the dean is a modicum of stability without a loss of flexibility (read: ability to eliminate the position) for the administration. However, the added likelihood of stability makes in-service investments at least a marginally acceptable expenditure of resources. Finally, regular part-time positions provide some reliable wiggle room for those last-minute unscheduled events that lead to perilous frantic hiring.

Even with these solutions in place (as in two schools in the National Capital Area), the lone-course part-timer who gets $2500 per course will continue to maintain a presence because of the volatility of enrollments. The suggestions here are meant only to reduce the number of such positions to a respectable distance below the halfway mark.

Conclusion

Looking beyond the National Capital Area to the profession as a whole, we do not have to ponder hard to see the need for a compromise leading to a "respectable" second tier of language teaching practitioners. We are at the dawn of an age in which institutions will turn increasingly from the economies of scale of large professorial lecture courses to courseware and electronically distributed instruction. Well-taught foreign language courses, while supported by multimedia delivered over great distances, will continue to demand relatively large amounts of face-to-face contact in small groups. The economics of such labor-intensive instruction will perpetuate a two-tiered faculty in many institutions. As long as academia makes published research the guidepost for tenure and promotion, highly competent foreign language teachers will

remain in the second tier. The issue before us is whether we can arrive at a compromise whereby that second tier is afforded even minimal conditions so that all win: the teachers, the students, the departments, and the institutions at large. Such an arrangement is not alien to the system of higher education at top universities in many other foreign countries, nor is it unrealistic for us.

Notes

1. Gappa and Leslie (1997) and Leslie (1997) are among many who provide statistics for all disciplines over various periods since the 1960s.
2. The policy statements on the use of part-time faculty from the ADFL (1994) and ADE (1998) are among the most widely circulated and broad-based of such papers to appear recently.
3. The institutions are located inside the Capital Beltway, with one exception just beyond the Beltway. The promise of no attribution to individual institutions increased the respondents' willingness to provide information.
4. While the National Capital Area job market supports the kind of high standards for Russian cited here, the same is not always true for other Slavic languages, at least in the one area school that regularly offers them. Czech and Polish courses, usually in the hands of experienced language pedagogues, are currently reported as being staffed by teachers with minimal experience.

Works Cited

Association of Departments of English (ADE). 1998. Statement from the Conference on the Growing Use of Part-Time and Adjunct Faculty. *ADE Bulletin* 119 (Spring): 19–28.

Association of Departments of Foreign Languages (ADFL). 1994. ADFL Policy Statements on the Administration of Foreign Language Departments. *ADFL Bulletin* 25(3): 119–120.

Benjamin, Ernst. 1998. Variations in the Characteristics of Part-Time Faculty by General Fields of Instruction and Research. *New Directions for Higher Education* 104 (*The Growing Use of Part-Time Faculty*): 45–59.

Bernhardt, Elizabeth B. 1997. Victim Narratives or Victimizing Narratives? Discussions of the Reinvention of Language Departments and Language Programs. *ADFL Bulletin* 29(1): 13–19.

Berry, Alice. 1996. Faculty Assessment and Development in a Changing Profession. *ADFL Bulletin* 27(3): 54–56.

Gappa, Judith M., and David W. Leslie. 1997. Two Faculties or One? The Conundrum of Part-Timers in a Bifurcated Work Force. *New Pathways Series*. Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education.

Hoffman, John R. 1980. *Community Services Catalyst* 10(1): 12–18.

Huber, Bettina J. 1993. Characteristics of College and University Foreign Language Curricula: Findings from the MLA's 1987–89 Survey. *ADFL Bulletin* 24(3): 6–21.

_____. 1995. Changes in Faculty Size from 1990 to 1994: A Survey of Ph.D.-Granting Modern Language Departments. *ADFL Bulletin* 26(2): 47–58.

Langenberg, Donald N. 1998. The Subfaculty. *New Directions for Higher Education* 104 (*The Growing Use of Part-Time Faculty*): 39–44.

Leslie, David W. 1997. Part-Time, Adjunct, and Temporary Faculty: The New Majority? *Report of the Sloan Conference on Part-Time and Adjunct Faculty*. Arlington, VA: Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

Lindenberger, Herbert. 1998. Must We Always Be in Crisis? *ADFL Bulletin* 29(2): 5–9.

Lombardi, John. 1992. The Ambiguity of Part-Time Faculty. In *Perspectives on Community Colleges*, edited by Arthur M. Cohen, 51–67. Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education.

Sullivan, Constance A. 1993. Women's Issues: Sexism, Joint Appointments, and Other Troublesome Matters. In *Managing the Foreign Language Department: A Chairperson's Primer*, edited by Sam L. Slick and Richard B. Klein, 153–162. Valdosta, GA: Southern Conference on Language Teaching.

Warhol, Robyn R. 1997. How We Got Contracts for Lecturers at the University of Vermont: A Tale of (Qualified) Success. *ADFL Bulletin* 29(1): 48–51.

Welles, Elizabeth B. 1998a. From the Editor. *ADFL Bulletin* 29(2): 1–2.

_____. 1998b. From the Editor. *ADFL Bulletin* 29(3): 1–2.

Ziolkowski, Theodore. 1998. What's Wrong with the Store: Management or Marketing? part of Forum Response to Bypassing the Traditional Leadership: Who's Minding the Store? *ADFL Bulletin* 29(2): 39–76.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

NOTICE

Reproduction Basis

☒ This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.

☐ This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").